

That fake could cost you
New York bill proposed to punish shoppers who buy counterfeit goods
> WORLD A11



Obama backs Syrian rebels
Now US officials must decide what kind of weapons to supply and how many
> LEADING THE NEWS A3

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Global talent hunt
60 sevens players in line for elite programme – now the search begins for top coaches
> SPORT BACK PAGE

South China Morning Post

DIGEST

Navy stages hazard response drill

The PLA Navy recently staged a maritime emergency response exercise on dealing with a biochemical leak in the Yellow Sea, the *People's Daily* reported, offering a glimpse of its new nuclear and biochemical hazard response unit. The team drew up a response plan to deal with possible contamination of China's coast by water from Japan's Fukushima nuclear plant. > CHINA A6

Ex-general open to Suu Kyi alliance

The head of Myanmar's pro-military party, Shwe Mann, said he would not rule out forming a coalition government with Aung San Suu Kyi's opposition party after elections in 2015. Shwe Mann was a trusted member of the old regime but has changed direction along with his country and is now viewed as a committed reformer. > ASIA A8

Police officers warned off accepting gifts

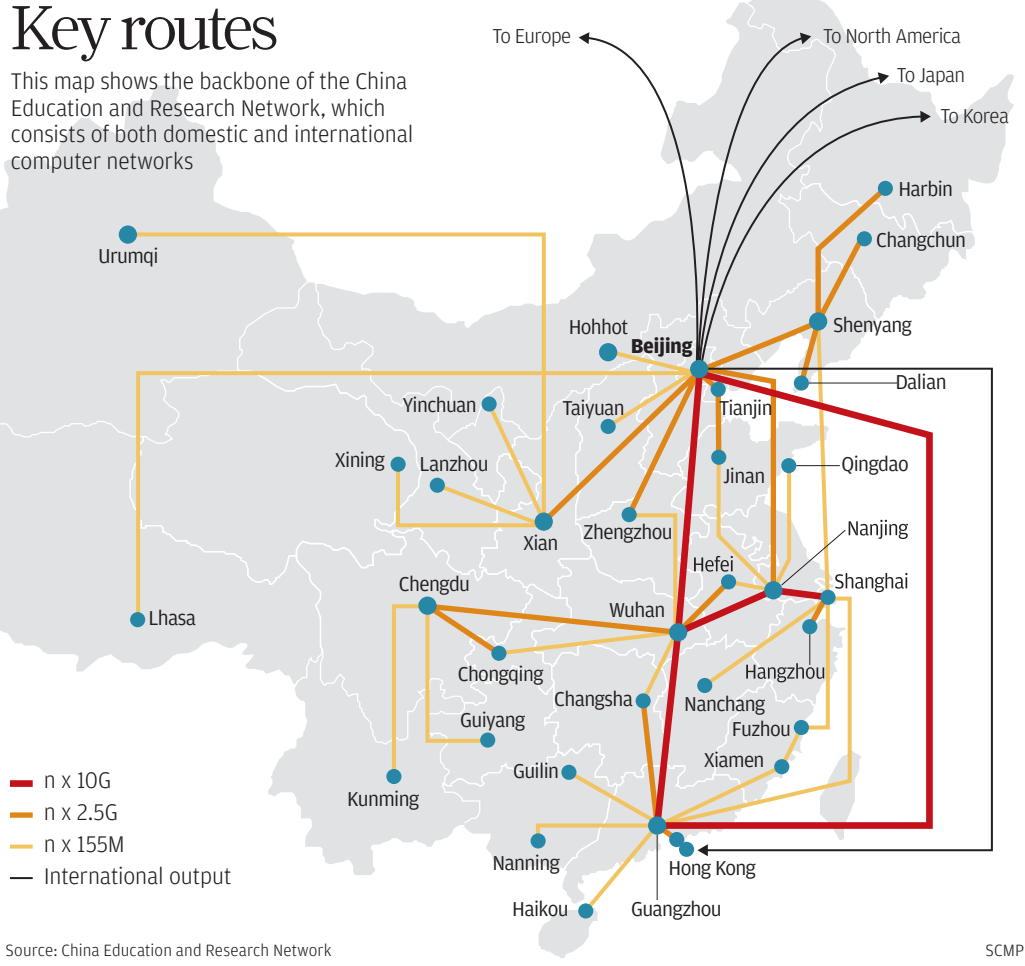
The police force has reminded officers not to accept favours or gifts that give them face. The internal letter came after a divisional commander was jailed for receiving discounts and whisky from a restaurant. A police spokeswoman said behavioural guidelines had been developed, requiring officers to avoid conflict of interest and not to abuse their position in official dealings. > CITY C1

Uncertainty drags on luxury flat site price

Wheelock Properties outbid 11 developers for a luxury residential site in Ho Man Tin. But it sold at the lower end of expectations, suggesting developers are nervous about acquiring sites for high-end homes, given the uncertain outlook. > BUSINESS B1

SECURITY

LOCAL CYBERSPYING SCANDAL DEEPENS



Beijing sets up cyberdiplomacy office

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The mainland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has set up an office to deal with diplomatic activities involving cybersecurity, a spokeswoman announced yesterday.

That comes in the wake of revelations by whistle-blower Edward Snowden that the US had been hacking into computer networks in Hong Kong and on the mainland for years.

The new cyberaffairs office is the first of its kind on the mainland. The Foreign Ministry spokeswoman said the mainland had been "a major victim" of cyberattacks and that the country opposed "cyberattacks in all forms". She said Beijing would discuss cybersecurity issues with the United States at next month's China-US strategic and security dialogue.

Mainland security experts said yesterday that Snowden's revelations about Washington's global cyberspying programme would speed up Beijing's drive to replace all foreign-made parts in its internet infrastructure with domestic products.

For years, security experts

Alleged hacking of Hong Kong computer networks unites lawmakers as they demand pressure on Washington to explain its actions

Joshua But and Tony Cheung

Political pressure is mounting on the government to demand answers from United States over how and to what extent Hong Kong has been targeted by Washington's top-secret cyberspying programme, exposed by whistle-blower Edward Snowden.

The clamour for information comes two days after ex-CIA analyst Snowden – who is hiding out in the city – told the *South China Morning Post* in an exclusive interview the US had been hacking computers in Hong Kong and on the mainland "for years".

Lawmakers from across the political spectrum yesterday weighed in to the growing controversy ahead of a rally expected to take place today outside the US consulate. The planned protest in support of 29-year-old Snowden prompted the consulate to issue a rare security warning to US residents in the city and tell its diplomatic staff to stay away from the mission's headquarters in Garden Road, Central, unless they are on "official business".

Snowden said secret and illegal attacks on Hong Kong computers by the US National Security Agency, which he said have been taking place since 2009, have recorded a success rate of more than 75 per cent. One of the targets he identified was the Chinese University of Hong Kong, home to the Hong Kong Internet Exchange – a central hub of servers that most web traffic in the city passes through.

Yesterday the British government issued a warning to airlines around the world not to allow Snowden to fly to the UK.

During an official visit to London, Legislative Council president Jasper Tsang Yok-sing became one of the city's first top political figures to comment on the hacking allegations.

"Hong Kong people will feel worried if the allegations are found to be backed by facts," Tsang told the BBC's Chinese Service, adding: "The Hong Kong government should launch an investigation. But even if a probe is conducted, it will not be made public."

Pro-Beijing lawmaker Ma Fung-kuok has filed an urgent written question to the administration, demanding details of the alleged hacking.

He asked: "What will the government do to ensure it will not happen again? Will it take action against the US government or demand remedies?"

Security minister Lai Tung-kuok is expected to address the question in the Legislative Council on Wednesday.

The Democrat Party has suggested inviting Snowden to Legco to question him over his claims, and Civic Party leader Alan Leong Kah-kit urged the chief executive to raise the matter with President Barack Obama. It is understood an appearance at Legco by Snowden is considered unlikely due to security fears.

The Hong Kong government has also refused to say whether the US has made a request to surrender Snowden.

In his BBC interview, Tsang insisted that the Hong Kong courts would "act independently" according to the law and "make a correct judgment".

"I do not think the incident will put any pressure on Hong Kong," the Legco president said. "If the case involves foreign affairs and national defence, it will be handled according to the Basic Law [which makes it Beijing's responsibility]."

In a move to support Snowden, pan-democratic lawmakers Claudia Mo Man-ching and Gary Fan Kwok-wai yesterday wrote a letter to the White House and pleaded for mercy for him.

What will the government do to ensure it will not happen again?

MA FUNG-KWOK, LEGCO MEMBER

INSIDE

- > MY TAKE A2
- > FOCUS A4-A5
- > HENG'S VIEW A12
- > EDITORIAL A12
- > INSIGHT A13

SOCCER

HKFA considers separating fans

Bid to curb racism after Philippines, Hong Kong match include confining fans to designated seats

Chan Kin-wa
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Opposing fans could be segregated for the first time under measures unveiled by the Hong Kong Football Association last night to tackle racism at matches.

In their first response to allegations of racist and discriminatory acts at the international friendly between Hong Kong and the Philippines last week, the HKFA outlined a number of actions to avoid such incidents. These include:

- Formalising "risk assessment" protocols and ensuring an anti-discrimination officer is present at the venue;
- Possibly segregating fans and using designated seats as part of the risk assessment process;
- Working with the authorities to identify fans who transgress;
- Making public announcements warning fans of the outcome of using racist language and asking them to respect national anthems.

"The HKFA will not tolerate any acts of racism or discrimination from spectators, players, coaches or administrators and will take the appropriate action against offenders," the authority said in a statement.

Ground stewards will also receive further training and work with law enforcement agencies to identify and eject anyone engaging in racist activity.

And an education action plan will be prepared in accordance with a recent resolution by Fifa, football's world governing body, to fight racism and discrimination.

The association yesterday submitted an initial investigation report to Fifa, despite not receiving any official request from either the Philippines Football Federation or the world governing body, according to chief executive Mark Sutcliffe.

Sutcliffe would not reveal the findings, "in view of the fact an official Fifa investigation may be carried out".

The Philippine federation on Thursday said it had asked Fifa to investigate allegations its supporters were subject to racist abuse, including chants they were "all just slaves".

The HKFA, which has also written to the Philippine consulate, stressed Hong Kong fans had a good record of behaviour and it was "the first incident of this nature at a football match in Hong Kong".

The HKFA will not tolerate any acts of racism or discrimination

HKFA STATEMENT

WORLD



What went wrong?

Murdoch split sparks feverish speculation > PAGE A9

WORLD

He must be gay, he's a hairdresser

Aussie shock jock insults PM Julia Gillard with jab at her partner > PAGE A10

CITY

Passion for teaching runs in the family

The rise of Yew Chung school from humble beginnings > PAGE C2

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